

Gay-rights bill wins initial OK from House

Divisive matter likely Ritter-bound

By ED SEALOVER
THE GAZETTE

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DENVER • A bill to bar workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation survived a barrage of amendments Monday and received preliminary House approval on a party-line vote.

After an expected final approval today, the bill goes to Gov. Bill Ritter, who has said he will sign it. If he does, it will become law on the ninth try by Sen. Jen Veiga, a Denver Democrat and the only open lesbian in the Legisla-

ture.

SB25 prevents sexual orientation or religion from being considered in hiring, firing, demotions or promotions.

Already outlawed are discrimination based on age, race and disability.

After every Republican in the Senate voted against the measure two weeks ago,

The Gazette

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TODAY

CHILDREN

"LITTLE WONDERS: A IS FOR ANT":

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CLUBS

VAST: 8 p.m., Black Sheep, 2106 E. Platte Ave., \$10-\$12; 1-866-468-7621 or www.ticketweb.com.

FOOD

"COFFEE WITH CLASS": Get the scoop on coffee beans and lattes, 6-8 p.m., Colorado State University Cooperative Extension Office of El Paso County, 305 S. Union Blvd., \$10; 636-8920.

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C NEWBORN CARE:

Tuesday and Thursday, \$30. Location, times and registration: 444-CARE(2273) or www.memorialhospital.com.

MOVIES

"DIRTY DANCING: 20TH ANNIVERSARY":

7:30 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday
Tinseltown 1545 E. Cheyenne Mountain

DISCRIMINATION: Amendments came up short

FROM PAGE 1

House Republicans attacked it from a bevy of angles Monday.

GOP representatives proposed unsuccessful amendments that would apply the law only to government agencies, would permit expressions of re-

ligion under the law and would exempt all religious organizations. As written, only religious organizations that receive no tax money are exempt.

Rep. Ray Rose, R-Montrose, proposed an amendment that would bar discrimination based on height, weight, hair color,

eye color and body shape, prompting Rep. Marsha Loop-er, a Calhan Republican, to complain facetiously that she is subject to endless blonde jokes.

That offended Rep. Ter-rance Carroll, a Denver Demo-cratic who is black, who accused Republicans of trying to trivial-

ize the serious issue of discrimi-nation against minorities.

"There's never been anyone lynched because of their height in this nation," Carroll said.

Rep. Bob Gardner, R-Colo-rado Springs, retorted loudly that this was a very serious amendment that would not

only correct documented dis-crimination but show that the Legislature was serious about outlawing all discrimination. Gardner said studies have shown that tall people are more likely to get jobs and rais-es, and Rep. Debbie Stafford, R-Aurora, said that obese peo-ple are less likely to get hired.

The speech had little effect — seven Republicans, includ-ing Teller County Rep. Victor Mitchell, defected and voted with the Democrats against the amendment.

Most of the battle on the floor was about whether reli-gious organizations that re-ceive some state funding, such as Catholic Charities and Luth-eran Ministries, should be ex-

empted.

Rep. Kevin Lundberg, R-Berthoud, argued that it is a fundamental belief of many of those organizations that do sig-nificant social work that homo-sexuality is wrong. Requiring them to hire with a blind eye to gays and lesbians is an "egregious violation of the reli-gious liberties of the people of Colorado," he said.

Carroll replied that govern-ment money should not perpet-uate religious beliefs.

"If you don't want to abide by Caesar's rules, maybe you shouldn't take Caesar's money," he said.

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ing combat operations in Anbar province, Iraq. He was assigned to the 2nd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force based at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

ARMY SPC. EDDIE D. TAMEZ, 21, of Galveston, Texas
ARMY PFC. DAVID A. KIRK-PATRICK, 20, of Upland, Ind.

Both soldiers died April 27 in Fallujah, Iraq, after an explo-



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